(b) the main reasons for such a dip, a part from input costs and import of new technology from abroad;

(c) how this trend is going to affect India's textiles sector when the Multi-fibre Agreement comes into effect in 2005?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) and (b) As per available Directorate General of Commerce Intelligence & Statistic (DGCI&S) data, the net export earnings from textiles during the last three years has increased as given below:

(Value in US$ Million)

	2001-02	**2002-03**	**2003-04**
Textile Export	10764.7	12412.7	13159.5
Textile Import	1539.4	1645.9	2015.3
Net Export Earning	9225.3	10766.8	11144.2

(c) The free global trading regime would result in increased international trade in textiles thus providings greater export opportunities for the indigenous textile industry. At the same time it will expose the domestic industry to increased competition in the international market. There is general perception that India's textile export in the post quota regime would rise.

Decline in Textile Export

1419. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the India's textile exports are declining in recent years;

(b) if so, details thereof and reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps have been taken by the Government to improve the exports?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) and (b) As per available Directorate General of Commerce Intelligence &

Statistics (DGCI&S) data, the textile exports during the last three years i.e. 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04 have been as given below:—

(Value in US$ Million)

Year	Textile Exports	% increase/ decrease over the previous year
April 2001-March 2002	10764.7	-10.6%
April 2002-March 2003	12412.7	15.3%
April 2003-March 2004	13159.5	6.0%

The decline during the year 2001-02 was mainly due to the general recession in the world market and stiff competition from low cost supplying countries.

(c) To strengthen domestic textile industry for meeting the growing global competition, the following important announcement have been made in the Union Budget 2004-05:

* Except for madatory excise duty on polyester filament yarn including texturised yarn, synthetic and artificial fibres and synthetic and artificial filament yarns, the whole value addition chain has been given excise exemption option.
* Additional Excise Duty on Textiles & Textile Articles (AT & T) and Additional Excise Duty (Goods of Special Importance) Act have been abolished.
* Basic customs duty on various textile machinery and spare parts has been reduced to 5%.

Besides, Government has been taking a number of steps from time to time to improve textile exports from the country. Some of the important initiatives taken are:

i. The Government has de-reserved the woven segment of readymade garment from the SSI sector. It has also raised the SSI investment limit for knitted segment to Rs. 5 crores.
ii. The technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) has been made operational from 1-4-1999 to facilitate the modernisation and upgradation of the sector.
iii. Weaving, processing and garment machinery, which are covered under TUFS, have been extended the facility of accelerated

depreciation at the rate of 50%. Cost of machinery has also been reduced through Fiscal Policy measures. This further encourages modernisation.

iv. With a view to making fabric production competitive, the custom duty on shuttleless looms has been brought from 15% to 5%.

v. National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT), its six branches and Apparel Training & Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses/programmes to meet skilled manpower requirements of textile industry especially apparel in the field of design, merchandising and marketing.

vi. Facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories have been created to enable exporters to get the garments/textiles pre-tested for conforming to the requirements of importing countries.

vii. The Government has launched a centrally sponsored scheme titled "Apparel Park for Export Scheme" for imparting focused thrust for setting up of apparel manufacturing units of international standards at potential growth centres and to give fillip to exports.

viii. For upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centers, a scheme "Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme" (TCIDS) has been launched.

ix. The Export Promotion Councils have been undertakings export promotion events like participation in overseas exhibitions/fairs, organizing BSMs abroad, sponsoring trade delegations in consultation with Indian Missions abroad.

Fund to help distressed Former Sports Greats

†1420. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to institute a fund to help the sports persons who brought fame to India at regional, State, country and/or international levels and who are now suffering from incurable diseases or facing financial problems; and

(b) if so, by when and the details thereof?

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.